

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the removal of water from a mixture comprising water and zinc chloride, which comprises
adding to said mixture comprising water and zinc chloride an aprotic, polar diluent
whose boiling point in the case where an azeotrope is not formed between said diluent and water
~~under the pressure conditions of the distillation mentioned below~~ is higher than the boiling point
of water and which is in liquid form at this boiling point of water
or
which forms an azeotrope or heteroazeotrope with water ~~under the pressure and temperature
conditions of the distillation mentioned below,~~
and
distilling the mixture comprising water, zinc chloride and the diluent with removal of water or
said azeotrope or said heteroazeotrope from this mixture, giving an anhydrous mixture comprising
zinc chloride and said diluent, wherein the aprotic, polar diluent employed is an aliphatic,
olefinically unsaturated nitrile selected from the group consisting of 2-cis-pentenitrile, 2-trans-
pentenenitrile, 3-cis-pentenitrile, 3-trans-pentenitrile, 4-pentenitrile, E-2-methyl-2-
butenenitrile, Z-2-methyl-2-butenitrile, 2-methyl-3-butenitrile or a mixture thereof.
2. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the diluent is able to form an
azeotrope or heteroazeotrope with water under the distillation conditions.
3. (Previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the mixture comprising
water and zinc chloride has a pH of less than 7.
4. (Previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the mixture comprising
water and zinc chloride has a pH in the range from 0 to less than 7.
5. (Previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein an acid is added to the
mixture comprising water and zinc chloride.
6. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 5, wherein the acid employed is HCl.

7. (Previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 2, wherein the mixture comprising water and zinc chloride has a pH of less than 7.
8. (Previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 7, wherein the mixture comprising water and zinc chloride has a pH in the range from 0 to less than 7.
9. (Previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 8, wherein an acid is added to the mixture comprising water and zinc chloride.
10. (Previously presented) A process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the acid employed is HCl.
11. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein a proportion of zinc chloride, based on the total weight of zinc chloride and water, in the ~~region~~ amount is at least 0.01% by weight.
12. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein a proportion of zinc chloride, based on the total weight of zinc chloride and water, in the ~~region~~ amount is at least 0.1% by weight up to 60% by weight.
13. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein a proportion of zinc chloride, based on the total weight of zinc chloride and water, in the ~~region~~ amount is at least 0.5% by weight up to 30% by weight.
14. (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the extraction of water occurs at a temperature of 0⁰ C to 200⁰ C.
15. (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the extraction of water occurs at a temperature from 5⁰ C to 100⁰ C.
16. (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the extraction of water occurs at a temperature from 30⁰ C to 50⁰ C.

17. (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the extraction of water occurs at a pressure the range from 10^{-3} to 10 MPa.

18. (New) The process as claimed in claim 14, wherein the extraction of water occurs at a pressure the range from 10^{-3} to 10 MPa.

19. (New) The process as claimed in claim 15, wherein the extraction of water occurs at a pressure the range from 10^{-2} to 1 MPa.

20. (New) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the extraction of water occurs at a pressure the range from 5×10^{-2} to 5×10^{-1} MPa.